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ABSTRACT

Because Area Agencies on Aging are increasingly required to perform case management functions for older adults, it is important to understand the patterns of need among persons of different racial or ethnic backgrounds as well as the general knowledgeability of persons about what sources are available to them. A conceptual framework was designed to examine the flow of services to older blacks and whites with respect to participation in and knowledge about available community sources of assistance for instrumental activities of daily living (IADL). Data were obtained from 1,100 older adults in Arkansas. Survey questions dealt with four IADLs: (1) the need for help with yardwork; (2) the need for help getting to places beyond walking distance; (3) the ability to prepare meals; and (4) the ability to perform personal care chores. An analytical model was employed to describe the various branching of older adults into service users and nonusers, and the sources of aid which they used or were aware of to assist with IADL functions. Differences between blacks and whites appeared to be minimal with respect to general needs for services and the number who accessed agency services. Both blacks and whites were found to be more likely to use informal than formal sources of help. The elderly blacks were less likely than whites to know of sources of assistance. (Eight data tables are included.) (NB)

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THE SERVICE TREE: A COMPARISON OF SERVICE KNOWLEDGE AND USE AMONG OLDER BLACKS AND WHITES

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ABSTRACT

This research presents a conceptual framework designed to examine the flow of services to older blacks and whites in respect to participation and knowledge about available community sources of assistance for instrumental activities of daily living(IADL's). Data are provided on 1100 older adults surveyed in Central and Southeast Arkansas.. The analytical model employed describes the various branching of older adults into service users and nonusers, and the sources of aid which they either use or are aware of to assist them with various IADL functions. The findings suggest differences between black and white aged are minimal in regards to general needs for services and the number which access agency services. Both black and white aged are much more likely to utilize informal rather than formal agency sources of help for the four IADL's analyzed in this study. However, black aged are generally much less likely to know of various sources of assistance irrespective of whether they are presently in need of services or if they were to develop a future need.

THE SERVICE TREE: A COMPARISON OF SERVICE KNOWLEDGE AND USE AMONG OLDER BLACKS AND WHITES

This report focuses upon the use and knowlege of older blacks and whites about formal and informal sources of assistance for a variety of health and social needs. Generally most of the formal services available to older adults are provided through the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's) or contract service providers as mandated by the Older American Act of 1965. Because the AAA's are increasingly required to perform case management functions for older adults in our society it becomes important to understand the patterns of need among persons of different race or ethnic backgrounds as well as the general knowledgeability of persons about what sources are available to them. Accordingly, the questions of how much assistance is provided by the formal and informal networks to those in need of help, of how great is the need to supplement the informal network, and on whether those in need of help are aware of programs to assist them are critical issues in aging policy.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE SERVICE TREE

Measurement of the aspects of utilization and knowledgeability of informal and formal sources of help is based on an instrument containing eight (of which four are to be used in this study) Instrumental Activities of Daily Living(IADL) questions. These questions were administered during the summmer of 1984 during a research project sponsored by an AARP-Andrus Foundation grant. The questionaire employed (See Appendix A) was specifically developed to delineate the complex nature of knowledge and use of AAA related services among blacks and whites surveyed in Southeastern and Central Arkansas. Each IADL item is in fact a complex or cycle of subitems. The subitems or cycle of questions are designed to solicit complex information in the most efficient manner possible. It channels respondents to later questions based on their responses to earlier ones. Thus respondents are directed to questions relevant to their use of services while often bypassing various questions which are geared to other use/knowledge subpopulations. For example, some respondents are directed around items indicating service use since they **do not** use such services, to items relevent to their knowledge of potential service sources. The four cycle questions utilized in this study deal with the following IADL's:

1. The need for help with yardwork.

2. The need for help getting to places farther than walking distance.
3. The ability to prepare ones own meals
4. The ability to perform personal care chores such as dressing, grooming or bathing.

Tables 1 through 8 illustrates in outline form the channelling process through which different subsets of the population were cycled based upon their answere to previous use and knowledge questions. Next to each of the cycle heading is a 'T1 or T2 etc.' designating the sequence that the question was asked and a dotted line indicating the next appropriate cycle question. The cycle questions began (T1) by separating out those persons who **did not** need any help in performing these IADL functions from those who **were** in some degree of need for assistance. Individuals who were able to perform these tasks **with no assistance** were asked only one additional question (T2), if they were to need help, would they know where to go to get that help. This question concluded the interview for this able bodied group of respondents.

Of those participants who perceived themselves as in **need of some help** based on question T1, a different set of questions was asked to determine if they had someone to help them with the IADL task (T3). This divided the T3 respondents into two subgroups, those who did not have a helper and those who did. This bifurcation led to a separate channelling process in which each subgroup was asked a different series of questions based on whether they had a helper or not. Those without a helper were asked if they knew where to go to get help with their IADL task (See T5). The cycle of questions ended here for those persons without a helper.

For those who had a helper, an additional four questions were asked; first they were queried as to who their primary helper was (T4). Based on their response to this item further subitems were asked; those who indicated an agency was the primary helper, were asked if more help were needed to assist them with the IADL function (See T7). Those indicating they had a nonagency primary helper on T4, were asked if they also received any agency assistance (See T6). Persons receiving supplemental agency help were then asked the T7 question if they needed more help with the task. For those responding that they did not receive any agency help (T6) and whose primary helpers were nonagency (T4), their cycle was concluded with a question as to whether they needed any more help with the IADL task (See T8).

The 'Service Tree' analysis is presented in three separate paragraphs which summarizes those cycle questions which are linked to each of the use/knowledge subgroups outlined above. Paragraph one and its associated subitems (T1 to T2) analyzes those 1100 persons sampled who were completely independent of any need for help. The second paragraph contains the four cycle items (T3 to T4 to T6 to T8) which provide a description of those persons in need of help who had helpers to assist them with the IADL function. The final paragraph is a summary of the two cycle questions for the subpopulation which was in need of help but **did not** possess a helper to assist them (T3 to T5). It should be noted that cycle question T7 was dropped from the analysis because of the lack of any significant responses on the part of the study participants. The number of respondents answering T7 is included in the study for benefit of the reader but an analysis is not provided

Eleven hundred respondents were sampled using a disproportionate sampling method to insure adequate representation of rural/urban, users/nonusers, blacks/whites, and young/middle/old older adults. The data collected using this method were then weighted to replicate the 1980 census distributions on Race(W/B), Age (5yr. cohorts), and sex in each of the three data collection areas of Southeastern and Central Arkansas.

NEED FOR HELP IN YARDWORK

A comparison of whites (Table 1) and blacks (Table 2) in the IADL function of need for help with yardwork (See branch T1) shows that a majority of both blacks and whites did need help with their yardwork to some degree. However a greater number of blacks (70.8%) than whites (56.2%) indicated they needed help with yardwork. Of those persons responding that they needed no help with their yardwork (29.2% blacks; 43.8% whites), one further question was asked of them, "If you were to need help with your yardwork, would you know where to go to get the needed help? (See T2)". The responses by blacks and whites to this question were strikingly similar. Blacks (10.4%) and whites (10.3%) were equally likely to indicate an agency as a helper. The majority of both blacks (55.7%) and whites (67.0%) said that they knew of non-agency sources for help with yardwork. Black (33.9%) aged were more likely than white (22.7%) aged to know of a source of help with yardwork if it emerged as a need.

Returning to that subpopulation which needed help with yardwork (See T1), the second cycle question (T3) in the

service tree was asked (Do you have a helper who does your yard?). Black respondents (67.2% yes) were less likely than their white counterparts (73.9% yes) to possess a helper. Those who responded that they **did not** have a helper were then questioned as to whether they knew where to go to get needed help (T5). Blacks and whites as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 differed considerably in their knowledge of available sources of help. Three out of four blacks (75.5%) as opposed to slightly more than half the whites (51.8%) stated they did not know any source for help with yardwork. Less than one of eleven blacks (8.7%) reported they knew of an agency to help them compared to almost one in four whites (23.9%). Whites (24.3%) were also more likely to know of a non-agency source for assistance than were blacks (15.8%).

For those who did possess a primary helper (See T4) Tables 1 and 2 point out that only one person of all 415 respondents in this filtered category reported that an agency was the primary source of help with their yardwork. Of the 414 persons who did not list an agency as their primary helper (T6) less than one percent (.7% black and .9% white) answered that they received any assistance from an agency. The remaining question, "Is any more help needed?" (T8), asked only of those persons with a primary helper (T4) and **did not** receive any agency help (T6) noted that a majority of both blacks (60.9%) and whites (72.0%) did not need any additional help with their yardwork. It should be noted that agencies in the service area do not feature yard services for their client population which accounts for the low number of agency sources listed.

NEED HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION

Tables 3 and 4 describe the service tree for persons in connection with the transportation IADL. The degree of help needed by blacks and whites to get to places they need to go that were farther than they could walk demonstrated the greatest difference in responses among the two racial categories. The majority of whites (67.4%) stated that they **did not** need help whereas only 43.1 percent of blacks **did not** need help getting places outside of walking distance. Among both blacks and whites that did not need help, knowledge of sources of help (T2) showed very similar response patterns. The majority of both blacks (54.8%) and whites (65.7%) indicated that they knew of a non-agency source for help in transportation. Only 13% of blacks and 15.8% of whites mentioned an agency as a source for needed help. As with the yardwork IADL, older blacks were more likely to state that they knew of no source of help (32.2%)

compared with whites (18.4%) although this was the second largest response category for both groups.

In connection with the group of respondents that needed help with transportation, subitem T3 shows that very high percentages of whites (78.2%) and blacks (72.3%) had someone to give them help with this need. As subitem T4 shows that although the majority of both blacks (83%) and whites (96.2%) had a primary helper which was a non-agency source, a far greater percentage of blacks (17%) than whites (3.8%) actually received assistance from an agency. Of those whose primary helper is non-agency, only 13.3% of blacks and 15.2% of whites also received help from an agency (see T6).

Among persons who listed no agency help (84.8% of whites to 86.7% of blacks) in subitem T6, 25.7% of whites and 32.9% of blacks needed more help than they were presently receiving (see T8).

PREPARATION OF MEALS

A review of the top of the service tree (T1) for Tables 5 and 6 illustrates the same racial pattern as exhibited in the preceding tables 1-4. More whites (75.4%) than blacks (62.9%) indicated they did not need any help with meal preparation although a majority of both groups noted they did not need help with this IADL function. Among those persons not needing help (See T2), whites (43.9%) were slightly more likely than blacks (38.9%) to know of nonagency sources of help as well as agency sources of help (37.6% for whites to 33.4% for blacks).
Black respondents were again less likely to know of any sources of assistance with meal preparation than were sampled whites (19.1% to 27.7%).

Following the branching of the service tree from T1 to T3, in the category of those persons who did need help with meal preparation it is apparant that the great majority of both whites (86%) and blacks (86.5%) do have a helper to assist them. The T4 branch continues the analysis of this group with helpers, noting that an agency is the primary helper for 32.4 percent of whites and 27.2% of blacks. Of those who have a non-agency primary helper (67.6% for whites to 72.8% for blacks), a sizable proportion of whites (43.1%) and blacks (49.7%) also receive assistance in meal preparation from an agency. The final sequence category for those with helpers (T8) notes that only one white and one black actually needed more help than they were presently receiving from their non-agency helper.

Returning to question T3 in the service tree focusing on those persons in need of help with meal preparation who have no helpers (14% for whites to 13.5% for blacks), when asked if they knew where to go to get the help they needed (See T5), a higher percentage of blacks (45.7%) than whites (36.9%) responded that they did not know of any sources of assistance. Slightly more blacks (45.2%) than whites (32.7%) did know of an agency from which they could receive help for meals while whites were more likely to know of informal networks or non-agency sources of help than were blacks (30.5%of whites to 9.2% of blacks).

NEED FOR PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE

Tables 7 and 8 present the final series of racial comparisons on knowledge of sources of aid and the degree of assistance being received in connection with a variety of IADL functions. At the beginning of the service tree data collection(See T1), it is apparent that more than four of every five persons(90.6%W to 80.8%B) do not need any help with personal care such as dressing, grooming and bathing. Among this group, when questioned as to their knowledge of sources for help should they need it--only 14.8 percent of whites and 13.5 percent of blacks selected an agency as their source for help. The majority of whites(55.4%) and blacks(51%) knew of nonagency sources for help with this IADL function. As with the three aforementioned IADL tasks, slightly more blacks(35.5%) than whites(29.8%) were unaware of any sources of assistance.

Addressing those persons in need of personal care assistance noted in T1(9.4%W to 19.2%B), the proportion of whites(75.5%) and blacks(92.4%) who have helpers for their needs(See T3) is again very high. Continuing to shadow this group with helpers through branch T4, we see that more blacks(44.6%) than whites(25.1%) have agencies as their primary helpers. Those persons indicating a nonagency primary helper in T4(74.9%W to 55.4%B) generally did not receive any secondary assistance from an agency as noted in T6(93.3%W to 96.7%B). The final branching question T8 which asks those not receiving any help from an agency but have nonagency primary helpers if they need any additional help, a sizable proportion of whites(31.8%) and blacks(33.6%) stated that they indeed needed more help in this IADL area.

Moving back up the service tree to T3 to those persons who need help but have no helper(24.5%W to 7.6%B), when queried about their knowledge of sources of assistance(See T5), much higher percentages of whites(36.9%) than blacks(14.5%) knew of an agency which could help them.

Whites(40.4%) were also more likely to know of nonagency sources than were blacks(11.5%). Almost 3 of every 4 black respondents(74%) in this category knew of no source of assistance while just over one of five whites(22.7%) selected the same response category. Some caution should be used in making generalizations about these last few categories which focus on persons with no helpers as the number of respondents in each of the categories is so small that any real statistical comparison is precarious at best.

SUMMARY

A number of patterns emerged in the description of the service flow patterns illustrated in the analysis of blacks and whites in Southeast Arkansas. These can be summarized in outline form which follows below:

1. The IADL's which focus on internal house activities such as personal care and meal preparation, had very small proportions of persons who were in actual need of help.

2. Exterior IADL tasks like yardwork and transportation generally had a majority of persons who indicated they needed help in these areas.

3. Among those not needing help, with the exception of the meal preparation task, fewer than one in six of either racial group were aware of an agency source of assistance. For meal preparation, just about one in three knew of an agency source.

4. Blacks were more likely than whites to not know of any source of assistance for any of the IADL tasks should they need it in the future.

5. The great majority of persons who are in need of help with various IADL tasks, receive the assistance of a helper.

6. Generally, the primary helper for this group is somenone from the informal network and not an agency.

7. There seems to be a connection between how well a particular service is known and how many persons utilize an agency as a primary helper (Compare T2 and T4)

8. Few persons who have a nonagency primary helper have secondary assistance from an agency.

9. Most persons who receive either agency or nonagency help do not need any additional help with the IADL task they need assistance with.

10. Black aged in our sample who were in need of help and had no helper were much less likely to know of any source of assistance to help them for all the IADL's analysed.

11. Corresponding to the pattern noted in number 10, older whites without helpers were much more likely to know of sources of formal (agency) and informal (nonagency) help. This suggests different patterns for nonuse--Whites may not access services even when they know of service sources while blacks may not access services due to lack of knowledge about available sources.

TABLE I
WHITES IN NEED OF HELP WITH YARDWORK

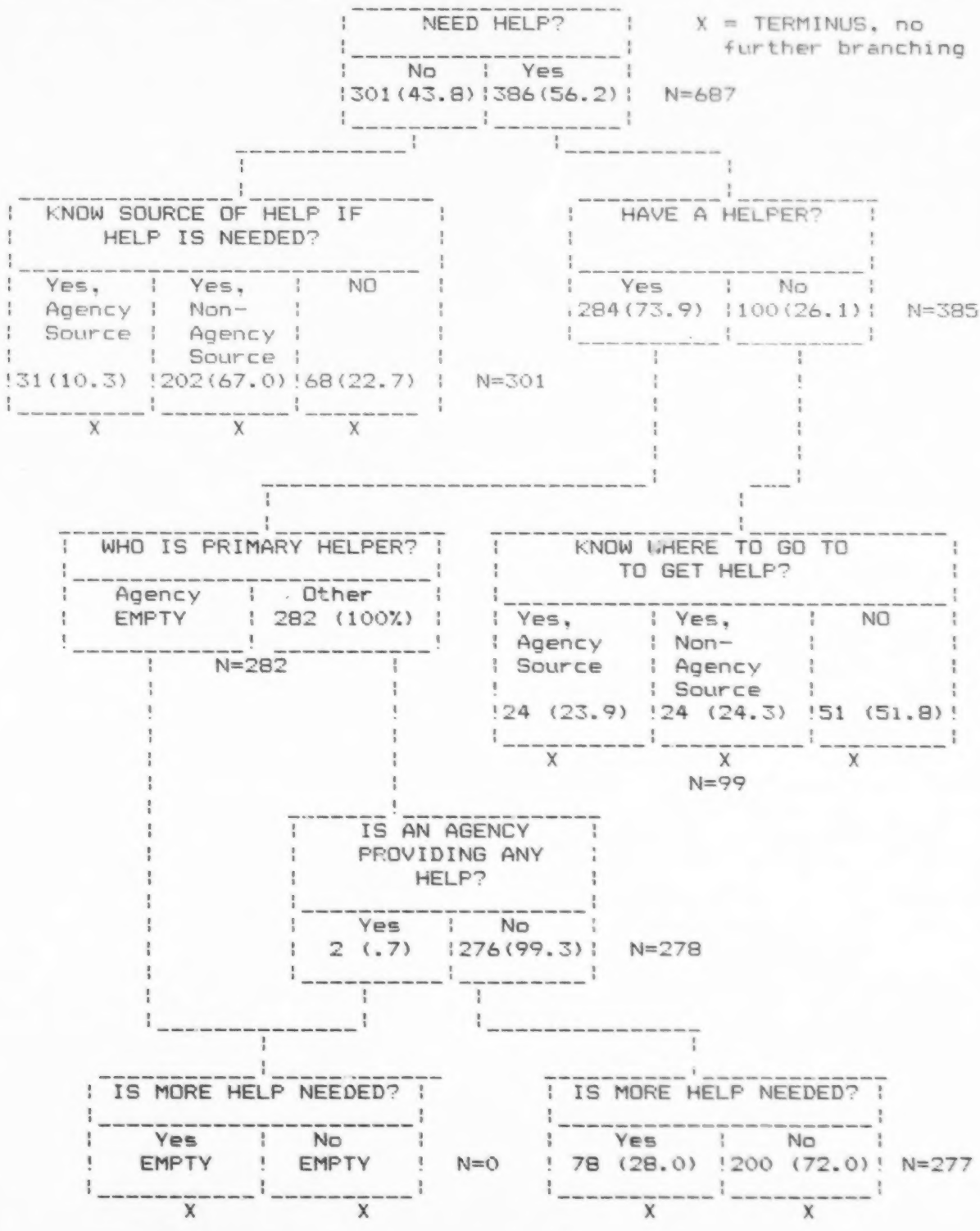

TABLE 2
BLACKS IN NEED OF HELP WITH YARDWORK

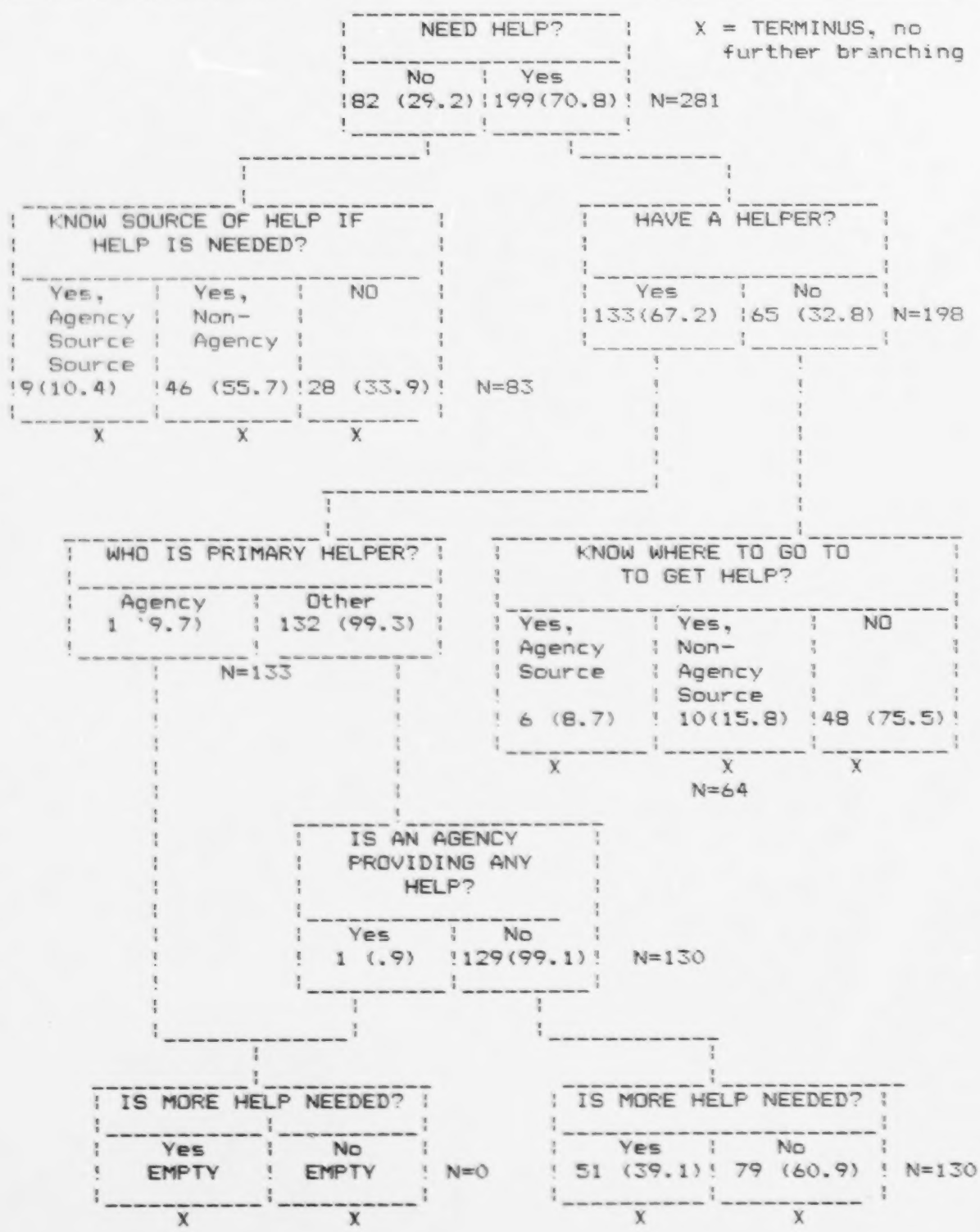

TABLE 3
WHITES IN NEED OF HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION

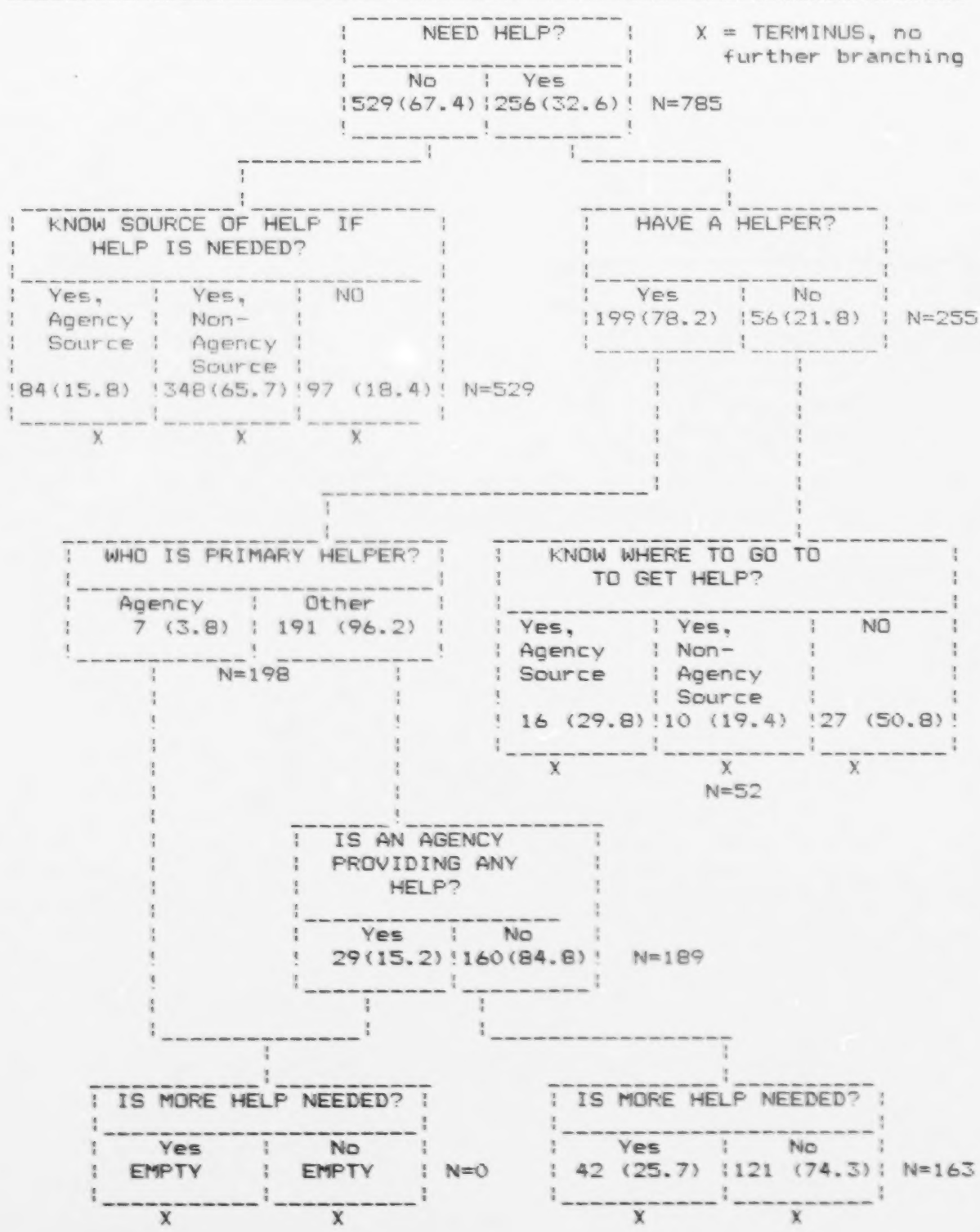

TABLE 4
BLACKS IN NEED OF HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION

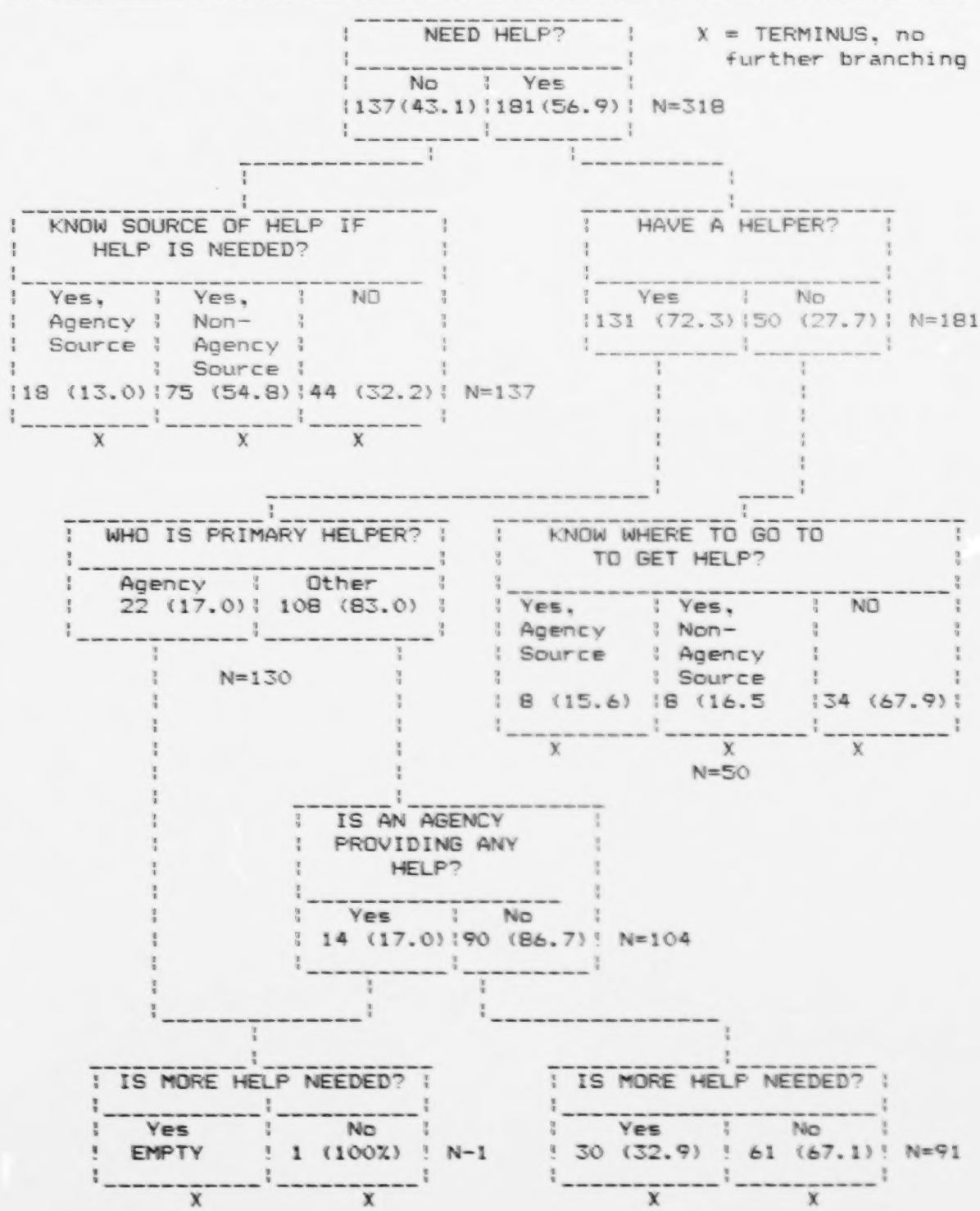

TABLE 5
WHITES IN NEED OF HELP WITH MEAL PREPARATION

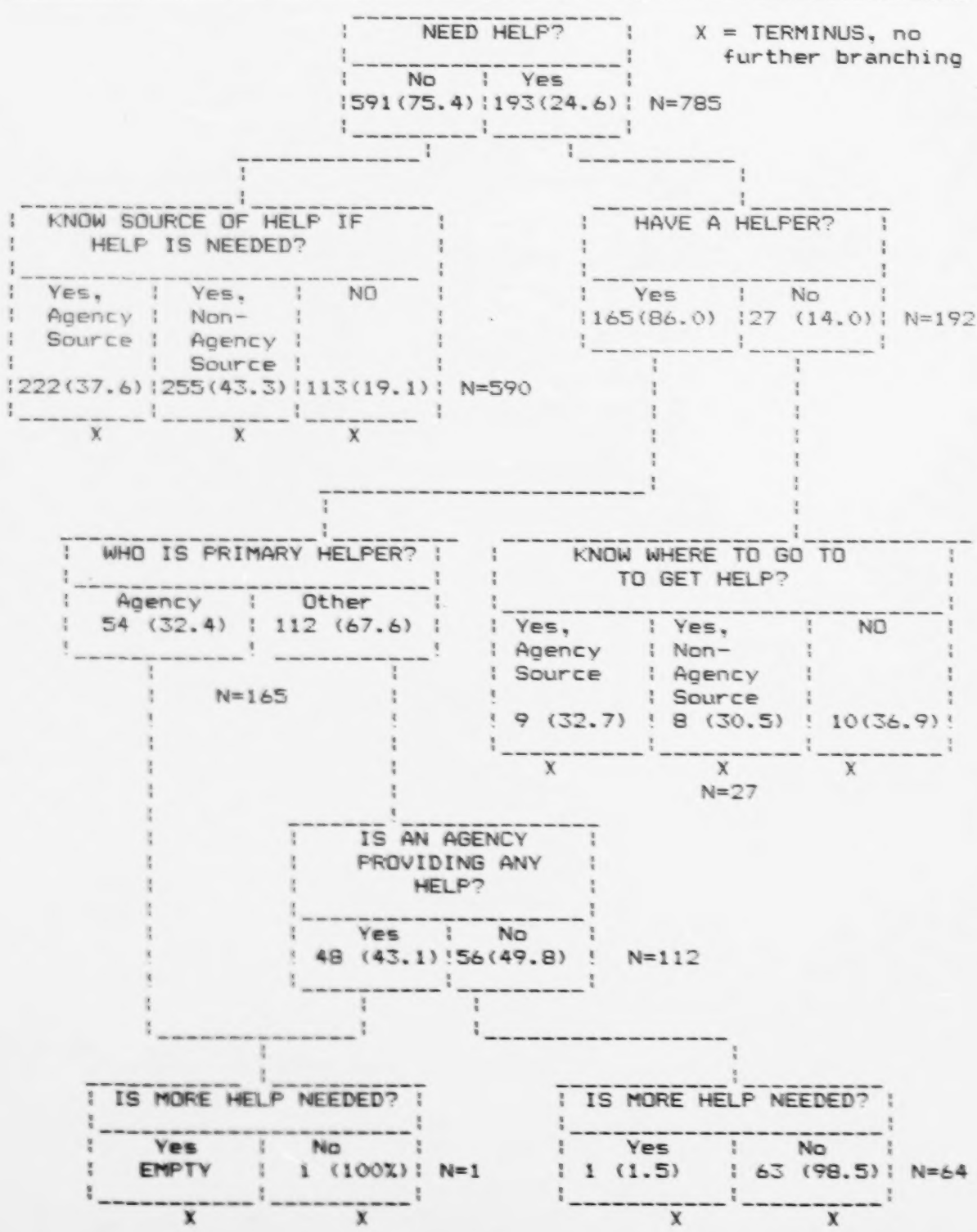

TABLE 6
BLACKS IN NEED OF HELP WITH MEAL PREPARATION

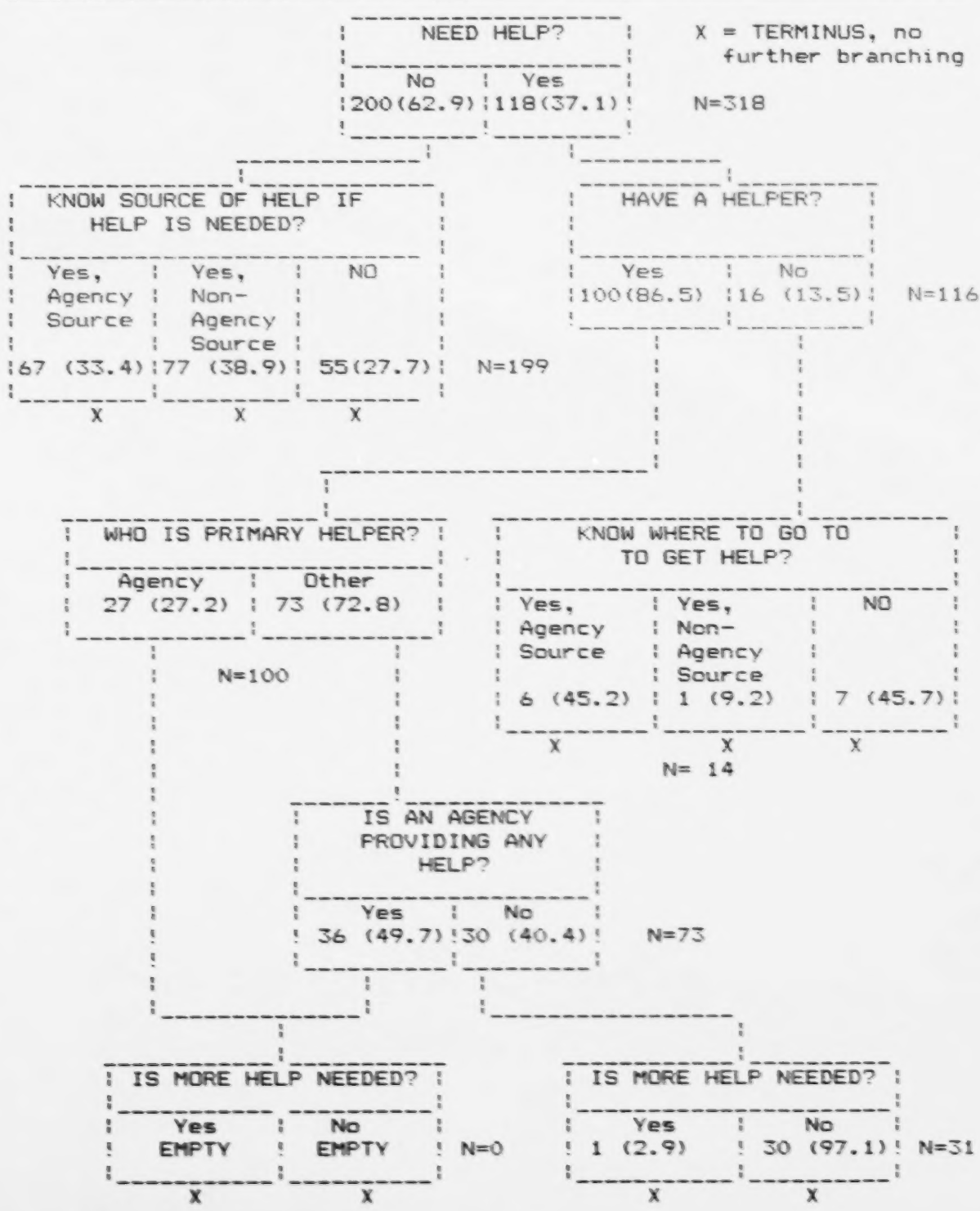

TABLE 7
WHITES IN NEED OF HELP WITH PERSONAL CARE

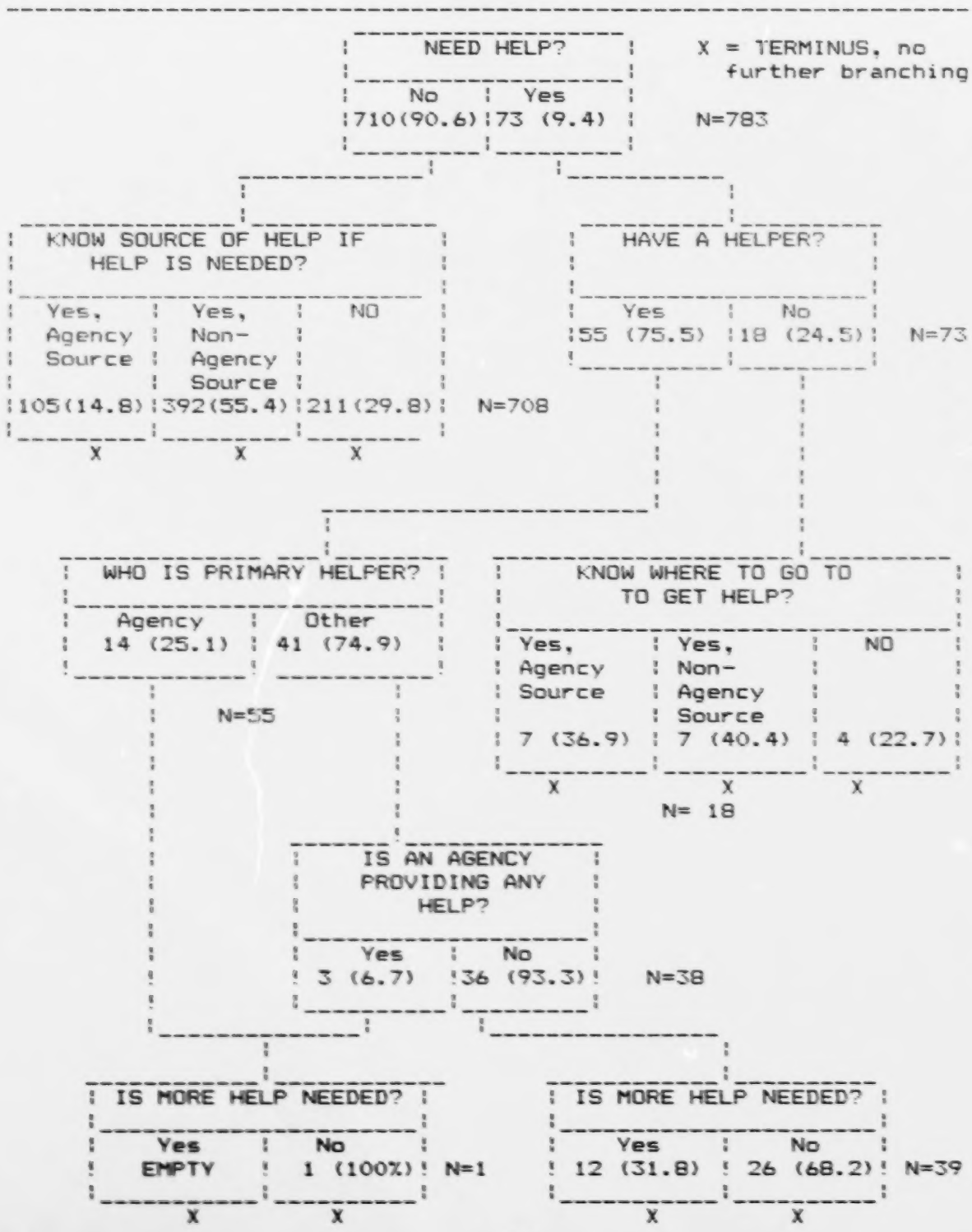

TABLE 8
BLACKS IN NEED OF HELP WITH PERSONAL CARE